THE

Bishop of St. *DAVID*'s

Thanksgiving Sermon,

Preach'd before the Right Honourable

HOUSE of PEERS,

ON

Tuesday the 29th of *May*, 1711.

Die Mercurij xxx° *Maij*, 1711.

ORdered by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, That the Thanks of this HOUSE be, and are hereby given to the Lord Bishop of St. *David's* for his Sermon Preached before this HOUSE Yesterday, in the Abby-Church, *Westminster*; And he is desired to Print and Publish the same.

Matth. Johnson,
Cler. Parliamentor.

E 110.10

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the Right Honourable

Houſe of Peers,

ON

Tueſday the 29th of *May*, 1711.

Being the DAY of

BIBL. CANT. ACAD.

Publick Thankſgiving

To Almighty GOD, for having put an End to the Great Rebellion.

By *PHILIP*, Lord Biſhop of St. *David's*.

LONDON:
Printed by *J. Leake*, for JONAH BOWYER, at the *Roſe* in *Ludgate-Street*, 1711.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the Right Honourable

House of Peers,

On

Tuesday the 29th of May, 1711.

Being the DAY of

Publick Thanksgiving

To Almighty GOD, for having put an End to the Civil Rebellion.

443;go

By PHILIP, Lord Bishop of St. David's.

LONDON:

Printed by J. Leake, for JONAH BOWYER, at the Rose in Lindgate-Street, 1711.

ZECH. VIII. 10, 11.

Before these Days there was no hire for Man, nor any hire for Beast; neither was there any Peace to him that went out, or came in, because of the Affliction; for I set all Men, every One against his Neighbour. But now I will not be unto the Residue of this People, as in the former Days, saith the Lord of Hosts.

GREAT and Manifold have been the Deliverances, which God hath vouchsafed unto the People of this Land; as have been also the Judgments, wherewith in every Age he hath visited our Sins. Such Providential Dispensations, undoubtedly, are disposed, with an Equal Hand, to every Nation under Heaven: But yet, the long Confusions under which our Fathers lay; and the Blessings, which This Day were Entirely, and at Once, Restored to their Posterity; may justly appear to Us of a more Signal Kind, than ever happened in any Age, or Nation of the World.

And it is no ill Sign of our Retaining, in ſome degree, a Due Senſe of thoſe Calamitous, and Guilty Times; that it hath never entered into any Man's Thoughts, to Lay Aſide the Celebration of this Joyful Deliverance. The Conteſts, concerning the Cauſes of our unhappy Troubles, have ſometimes run ſo high among us; that, in the Diſpute, Men have been almoſt carried again into Civil Diſſentions: But, that it was the Hand of God, which put an End to the Calamity, we All are willing to own with Joy, and Thankſgiving.

But, notwithſtanding Our different Way of judging in theſe Matters, God Almighty vindicates to himſelf the ſole Government of the World; *I ſet all Men, every One againſt his Neighbour: but Now I will not be unto the Reſidue of this People, as in the former Days, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* The Factious Principles, and the Turbulent Spirits of Men in thoſe Times, were the immediate Inſtruments, whereby God made them Execute his Vengeance on one another; but the Crying Sins of the whole People were the True, and Effectual Cauſes of theſe Calamities. And therefore, when we have, in the

Firſt place, taken a ſhort View of the Miſeries of thoſe unhappy Times, in order to poſſeſs our Minds with a Due Senſe of the Mercies, we Commemorate, we ſhall in the

Second

Second place, Endeavour to Aſſert the Dominion of God in the Kingdoms of Men, by ſhewing, that our Calamities, as well as Deliverances, do proceed only from his Righteous Hand. *I ſet all Men, every One againſt his Neighbour; but Now I will not be unto the Reſidue of this People, as in the former Days, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

Firſt, Altho' it may be Grievous to recal the Memory of thoſe Times; yet it is neceſſary to take a ſhort View of the Confuſions, that ſo long oppreſſed our Native Country; in order to poſſeſs our Minds with a Due Senſe of the Mercies, which we Commemorate. Wars are ever a Dreadful Calamity to Mankind. When they ariſe between Nations, entirely Diſtinct, and that have no common Bands of Amity with one another; the Burthen is weighty enough, even on the Conquering Side; and the many Great Victories of this Glorious and ever Memorable Reign, have not left us without Reaſons to Deſire a Safe, and Honourable Peace. But, when a Kingdom is divided, and torn to Pieces within it ſelf; when a People embodyed under the ſame Laws, and united in the ſame Intereſts, carry their Differences into an Open Civil War; a whole Age ſhall not retrieve the Miſchiefs, done in a ſingle Moment. The Firſt Breach in theſe Inteſtine Commotions, is more difficult to be Re-

pair'd, than All the Inroads, that can be made by a Foreign Enemy, in the Courſe of a tedious War. *The Breach* (as the Prophet expreſſes it) *is Great like the Sea; who can heal it!* The Animoſities, and Reſentments, and Rancour, that muſt have been long fermenting in the Hearts of Men, before they can break out into ſuch an Open Flame, make them dip at Firſt into the Utmoſt Cruelties: And, be the Factions never ſo Oppoſite in their Principles, and Opinions; yet the Relations, and Alliances, which Thoſe, that breath the ſame Air, muſt neceſſarily have with one another, make the whole Tranſaction, ſeem at leaſt of a more Inhumane and Unnatural Kind.

But, theſe were Miſchiefs, which tho' very terrible; yet, in a few Years, vented their Fury, and expired of themſelves among Us. The Settlements that followed, the Eſtabliſhment of Confuſion, and Anarchy, by Ordinances of a Pretended Legal Power, which had firſt pulled up all the Ancient Land-Marks of the *Engliſh* Conſtitution, were the moſt Dreadful Part of this Calamity. For it was a ſad Circumſtance of this Unnatural Rebellion, that the Thoughts of Changing the Kingly Government of this Nation, came then firſt into the Minds of our People; and, what was worſe, that they then firſt began to ſay; *We will make to our ſelves Gods alſo, like the Nations*

tions round about Us. We alone, at the Reformation, had happily Preſerved that Form of Government, which our Saviour, and his Apoſtles had, at firſt, Eſtabliſh'd in the Chriſtian Church: But, what was the great Misfortune of our Neighbouring Countries, and is, at this Day, lamented by the Conſidering, and Impartial Men among them; was, at laſt, thought to be a Model, fit for our Imitation; and We departed from the Undoubted Ordinance of God, to ſet up That, which was the Undoubted Invention of Men. This New Plan of Church Government may, perhaps, ſecure the Morals of People in Countries where Neceſſity, or Invincible Prejudices have thrown Them upon it: But with Us, who out of Choice, and even Wantonneſs ran into it, of Our Selves; it Overwhelm'd Us with Prophaneneſs, and Enthuſiaſm, like a Sea; and there appear, ſtill, the ſad Marks of the *Shipwreck of Our Faith*, in the prodigious Number of Sects, and Schiſms, and Hereſies, it hath left behind it.

And then, as to the Civil Government, Eſtabliſh'd from Ages Immemorial, in theſe Kingdoms; how was it torn to Pieces by the Republican Spirit, which (as we obſerv'd) then alſo, Firſt, infeſted our Conſtitution!

The Barons of Old had many ſharp Conteſts with their Sovereigns; and had it often in

their

their Power to have attempted, at leaſt, a Change in the Kingly Government of this Nation: But, ſuch a Thought never took Place among Us, till, in this Popular Rebellion, the very Dregs of the People got a reliſh of ſupreme Power; and ſeem to have imbib'd with it, ſuch poiſon'd Principles, as may taint the Ancient *Engliſh* Spirit, for many Ages to come.

From that Date it was, that the *Vox Populi* began to Proclaim in our Streets, concerning the *Kingdoms of the Earth*; *all this Power is mine, and to whomſoever I will, I give it:* And (what is more, than is found in the firſt Claim to this Power) from whomſoever I will, I alſo take it away. From theſe Peſtilent Notions, which were ſown in that dark Night of Confuſion, have the Tares ſprung up, and ſo over-run the Field, that it would be difficult to root them out, without endangering the whole Harveſt.

If any great and ſore Calamity, as Sword or Plague, or Famine rages among a People; 'tis dreadful indeed for the preſent; but it doth not much affect the next Succeſſion of Men: Multitudes only are ſwept away ſomewhat before their Time; and tho' the Survivors remember it with Terror, there is little Appearance of it to be ſeen ſoon after the Calamity is over: But Here we ſenſibly feel the Miſchief, ſtill fermenting in the Bowels of the Nation;

tion; and have juſt Reaſon to fear, that the Antipathy, then contracted againſt the Fundamental Conſtitution both of Church and State, will not be extinguiſh'd, at leaſt, in this Generation. *God* (as the Prophet expreſſeth it) *hath mingled a perverſe Spirit in the midſt of us*; as a Leaven for his future Judgments, whenever he ſhall think fit to ſcourge our Poſterity. For Providence generally corrects a People, grown to its height in Pride and Power with ſome fond Conceit, which they have firſt wilfully Eſpouſed; and afterwards with great Care have Cultivated to their own Deſtruction. Neither among the plentiful Materials of this kind, laïd in by us, can there be found a ſorer Inſtrument of God's Vengeance for puniſhing a ſinful Land, than this prepoſterous Spirit of attempting to Alter the whole Frame of our Conſtitution.

For, however a Republick may thrive in another Soil, it is certainly not of our Natural Growth; neither can it ever be Imported and Planted here, but by firſt Eradicating all the Fundamentals of a Conſtitution, which hath Flouriſh'd very Proſperouſly in this Iſland, among all the Variety of its Inhabitants, we are ſure, for near Two Thouſand Years.

It is not indeed Impoſſible, but that Men may Live Happily under any Kind of Civil Government, when it hath been long ſettled among

mong them, and Gradually adapted to their Genius and Temper: The Miſchief lieth in pulling up Foundations, where-ever they are once Surely and Firmly laid. Neither was a Commonwealth ever changed into a Monarchy, but with the utmoſt Struggle, and by very long and terrible Convulſions. And, perhaps, it may be juſtly doubted, whether Abſolute and Arbitrary Dominion (the worſt ſort of Government, certainly, on the Face of the Earth, which, nevertheleſs, hath ſo Long Obtained in all the Eaſtern Parts of the World) could be Reduced at Once, to thoſe Mild and Happy Limitations, which we particularly Enjoy; without as much Diſturbance to the People themſelves, as it would be to us, ſhould we, Ever Again, be reduced under an Abſolute and Arbitrary Power. I ſay reduced under an Abſolute and Arbitrary Power again; for a Power more Abſolute and Arbitrary than That, which was here raiſed, under a Pretence of Redreſſing the Grievances of Kingly Government, never did Oppreſs any People in the World. After the Eſtabliſhment was once Subverted, nothing ever took Place, but Pure, Unmix'd Tyranny of various Kinds; and Enthuſiaſm of different Complexions; agreeing only in this one Reſolution, never to return to the Ancient Settlement of Church and State.

But

But God, in his great Compaſſion, defeated our Reſolutions of being Miſerable for Ever. The whole Frame, both of the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Polity, was reſtored Entire, and ſet upon its true Foundations again. *The Dry Bones did Live*; for Dead they had been. Where the Parts are only disjointed, they may be reſtored even by the Hand of Man, tho' not without Anguiſh and Pain: This appears to have been truly a Reſurrection; in that it was effected with as much Joy and Tranſport to our ſelves; as it was wrought with Eaſe to the Hand of the Almighty. *God* (as the Scripture expreſſeth it) *is Fearful in Praiſes*, his very Works of Mercy are Aweful, and command a Reverence from Sinful Men. His Judgments were full of Terror and Wonder; neither were his Bleſſings of a leſs Aſtoniſhing kind: *As was his Majeſty, ſo was his Mercy*; and this brings us to the

Second General Head, which was to Aſſert the Dominion of God, in the Kingdoms of Men, by ſhewing, that our Calamities, as well as Deliverances, do proceed only from his Righteous Hand. *I ſet all Men, every one againſt his Neighbour: but now I will not be unto the Reſidue of this People, as in the former Days, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* God Almighty doth every where in the Holy Scriptures vindicate this Honour to Himſelf; for it is ſolely his Ho-

nour to Govern the World: *He Killeth, and He maketh Alive: He turneth Man to Deſtruction; again he ſaith, Come again ye Children of Men.* When the Sins of a People are *grown up to Heaven*, and cry for Vengeance; whatever are the viſible Inſtruments of their Miſery, 'tis their Sins that are the real Ground of what they Suffer; and God the Author of All that is brought upon them.

The Captivity of the *Jews* ſeem'd entirely Owing to the irreſiſtible Power of the King of *Babylon:* And this appears to have been alledged by thoſe, whoſe Office it was to Comfort them under their Calamities, as being the common Fate of all the Nations round about them. *Thy Prophets*, ſaith God by *Jeremiah*, *have ſeen Vain and Fooliſh Things for thee, and they have not diſcovered thine Iniquity to turn away thy Captivity; but have ſeen for thee falſe Burthens and Cauſes of Baniſhment.* We, perhaps, may now diſcern alſo many Natural Steps, which fatally led us into our miſerable Diſſentions. "He that ſhall diligently obſerve the "Diſtempers and Conjunctures of Time, will "find, ſays the Hiſtorian, all theſe Miſeries to "have proceeded, and to have been brought "upon us, from the ſame Natural Cauſes, "which have uſually attended Kingdoms, "ſwoln with long Plenty, Pride and Exceſs, "towards

" towards ſome ſignal Mortification, and Ca-
" ſtigation of Heaven.

And this was, doubtleſs, a very wiſe Reflection upon the Firſt Seeds, and upon the Miſchievous Growth of thoſe Unhappy Troubles: But, if we reſt in theſe, they are but *falſe Burthens, and cauſes of Baniſhment*. 'Tis when God ſeeth fit to puniſh the Sins of a People, and then alone, that the moſt powerful Tendencies either in Men or Things, can produce any real Effect: At other Times he maketh the blackeſt Clouds to diſappear; and *like Smoke do they vaniſh away*. God is very Good to his unworthy Creatures: He frequently for our Good, diſappoints us in our Hopes; but when there is any room for Mercy, He particularly delights to diſappoint us in our Fears.

When we are under Apprehenſions of ſome great Impendent Ruin (We of theſe Nations ſhall ever remember the Terrors we were in juſt before the Revolution) amidſt the Preparations we were laying in againſt Perſecution and Martyrdom, how were we Surprized, as well as Bleſſed, with a Joyful Deliverance!

Again, when Men are, on one Side really ſet to redreſs Grievances, and to preſerve the juſt Rights of the People, on the other, to ſecure only the Prerogative from Violence, and to ſupport the Dignity of the Crown (this might

poſſibly be the Caſe, as to the Intentions of Men before the beginning of our Troubles) in theſe Conteſts, their Paſſions riſe inſenſibly into deſperate Oppoſition to one another, and break out into an open War; when not one Man, not thoſe themſelves, that dip'd afterwards into the deepeſt Guilt of this Rebellion, entertain'd a Thought of ſuch a Deſign.

We may do this Juſtice, and 'tis but Juſtice to the deteſted Memories of the leading Patriots, in thoſe Unhappy Times: For whatever they were led to by Succeſs, certainly they had not the ſame Thoughts at firſt ſetting out: The latent Wickedneſs of Mens Hearts, and the Seeds of Miſchief, of which they are not even Conſcious themſelves, are often drawn out by Opportunity and Action; as the Parts of the Uſurper were obſerved to Open, and his Abilities to be Enlarged, as he wrought his Way up to the Supreme Command.

Neither is it an Impeachment of the Holineſs, and Infinite Purity of the Divine Nature, that God, in executing his Judgments on a ſinful Land, permits Wicked Men to purſue their Wicked Principles into Open Acts of Violence; and to find themſelves as Wicked in Fact, as they are in their Hearts; worſe by much, than the World, or They themſelves ever thought they

they had been. Doubtleſs, many Good, and many Wicked Men there were, in each Party, at the beginning of theſe Unhappy Troubles: For a Righteous Cauſe doth not ſuppoſe thoſe, that ingage in it, to be all of them Righteous Men; neither doth an Ill Cauſe ſuppoſe all, that are involved in its Guilt, to be Maliciouſly Evil. But, when God ſees fit to Puniſh Thoſe, that are incorrigibly Wicked in a Land; and to Correct Thoſe, that, on either Side, may be made better by Calamities; and (for the Wiſe Purpoſes of his Providence) to ſend his Judgments upon the Whole; which to be ſure the beſt of them all, do juſtly deſerve: He then *maketh a Way for his Indignation to paſs* among them; he permits the Dormant Principles of Wicked Men to break out into Action; the Zeal of Others to oppoſe their Attempts, tho' with honeſt Intentions, yet with Eagerneſs and Vehemence; and upon the whole, to raiſe ſuch a Flame among themſelves, *as devoureth* both the Oppreſſed and *Oppreſſor*. This is, what is meant by the Words in the Text: *I ſet all Men, every One againſt his Neighbour*. And God alone can do this: He alone can Raiſe, and Controul, and Direct both the Innocent, and Criminal Paſſions of Men, to his Righteous Purpoſes; and make them ſerve the Ends of his Providence in Chaſtiſing, and Correcting, and, if poſſible, Reforming a Wicked World.

And,

And, if God doth thus immediately Concern Himself in Directing, and Controuling the Calamitous Events, which attend the Course of Humane Affairs: If He, in the manner we have explained it, *Setteth all Men, every one against his Neighbour*: We may be assured, that from Him alone do proceed all the Great Revolutions, that Restore Peace, and Happiness to the harassed Kingdoms of the World. Men, by the Permission of God, are capable of doing a great deal of Mischief to one another: But, to do Good, especially that, which is of an Extensive kind, belongs to Him alone. And He is ever ready to do it, He never willingly *Afflicteth the Children of Men*. But when he hath suffered them to Afflict One another, as far, as He sees it will conduce to their own Amendment, and serve the All-wise Purposes of his Providence, in Governing the World: He *commandeth the devouring Sword, and it devoureth no more*; He pacifieth the outrageous Passions of Men, He Controuls their Malice, and Disarms their Fury.

Sometimes a Pious and Peaceful Prince, *whom He delights to Honour*, is visibly arm'd with a Power, every way equal to his High Commands; and the World is permitted to see the Hand, which by the Prudent and Vigorous Conduct of a tedious War, gradually subdueth an Over-grown Oppressor of Mankind. But, the

the Deliverance, for which we This Day praiſe the Goodneſs of God; ſeemed to be the immediate Work of his Over-ruling Providence, and not to be intruſted to any Mortal Hand. He wrought out this Salvation for Us, in ſuch a manner, as ſurprized both the King, and the People, and the very Conductor of this Deſign himſelf, and every Kingdom round about Us. The Neighbouring Princes ſtood amazed at the ſuddenneſs of this Great Event, and ſaid, *This hath God done; for they perceived, that it was his Work.* They were all Conſcious, to their everlaſting Reproach, how far they had been from endeavouring to Compoſe our Troubles: And One, who fomented them in their very Riſe, hath lived (a Prodigious Reign! but, a Juſt Return upon his hoary Head! hath lived) to feel the Vengeance of the *Britiſh* Power.

Certainly, there never was a Turn in any Humane Affair, ſo impoſſible as This in all appearance, yet Effected at laſt, almoſt without Deſign; 'tis certain, without the leaſt Oppoſition. Attempted in vain, for many Years, by all the Power of Man: Brought about, in one ſingle Moment, by the alone Hand of God. The Deſtruction of King and Parliament, by the Powder-Treaſon (to obſerve the Difference between the Effects of Divine Goodneſs, and the Miſchief of Humane Deſigns) that Deſtruction,

had

had it taken Effect, would ſcarce have been more ſuddain, than was this Happy Reſtoration of Both to all their Prerogatives, and Legal Rights at once; and what was, and ever will be, the beſt Security of Both; to the Good Underſtanding, that had been loſt, for ſo many Years, between them.

At the ſame time the Church, was not only ſet again upon its Ancient Foundations, thoſe whereon it had been Built, at firſt, by Chriſt himſelf; but Reſtored to All the Gracious Rights, wherewith the Building had been ſtrengthened, in ſucceſſive Ages; and framed into the Body of the *Engliſh* Conſtitution. And may it ever remain on this Foot! aſſured of the Protection of the Almighty, as beſt ſuited to Our Saviour's Own Inſtitution; and guarded by the Civil Power, as more Obſervant of its Authority, than any Church in the Chriſtian World.

To ſum up all: A People never received at any one Time, or indeed in any Courſe of Years, greater Bleſſings, than were Reſtored, at once, to the whole Nation in General, by this Wonderful Deliverance.

And yet, notwithſtanding that at this Juncture, God was pleaſed to Reſtore Our Affairs; it cannot be diſſembled, but that the Minds of Men have never yet recovered their Ancient Settlement, or been quieted in the Poſſeſſion

Poſſeſſion of thoſe Peaceful Principles, which are the beſt, if not the only Security of Church and *State*.

The Crown was indeed reſtored to its Outward Dignity, the Church to its Diſcipline and Worſhip, but when will the Diſhonourable Notions which crept into the Thoughts of Men, during thoſe Confuſions, ſuffer either of them to recover their Ancient Reverence, and Due Regard!

Beſides, amidſt the very Joy that attended this Great Deliverance, what a Melancholy Circumſtance was it, to conſider, that not One Man came out of thoſe Troubles, with a clear Conſcience, but who had all along before undergone the ſharpeſt Calamities? And that all Others, who had mixed themſelves in the various Revolutions of thoſe Times, were forced, now to get out of theſe Perplexed Affairs, almoſt as Wickedly, as before they had Kept in. Infinite Hypocriſy was uſed to prevent, and no ſmall degree of it, to bring about the Reſtoration. It ſeemed neceſſary that ſome of the moſt Guilty ſhould be Rewarded, and it could not be avoided, but that ſome, who had ſuffer'd moſt, ſhould be, too much, Neglected.

Theſe are the never-failing Conſequences of ſuch diſtracted Times; and Providence giveth us frequent Inſtructions, of this terri-

ble Nature, to preſerve the Peace of the World; and when we will not be Reſtrained from Violence by ſuch Examples, to make us know, that God ruleth in the Kingdoms of Men.

And yet alas! theſe Impreſſions, tho' ſo ſtrongly Inforced, have ſunk ſo ſlightly into the Minds of our People; that, after all the Care that hath been taken, there doth not appear (humanly ſpeaking) a better Security for our avoiding the like Diſſentions for the future; than that we ſeem to have no Principles left, either Good or Bad, which can be Powerful enough to engage us in any Enterprizes of ſo hazardous a Nature. A miſerable Security this, againſt the heavieſt Judgment that God can inflict on the Sons of Men. And indeed it is vain to think of ſecuring our ſelves againſt the Righteous Judgments of God, either by contriving Eſtabliſhments of the wiſeſt Kind, or by infuſing into the Minds of Men, Principles of the moſt ſteddy Loyalty, or by endeavouring to Extinguiſh All Pretences to Arbitrary Power, or by any Other Method whatſoever; unleſs, withal, we take due Care to recommend our ſelves to the Favour of God, to the Protection of the Good Providence of the Almighty.

From

From the History of those Times, I trust, We All do propose to our selves, only the avoiding the Fatal Steps, which led the Way to those Unhappy Troubles, and that there can be none among us of such an Evil Mind, as from thence to take their Measures for avoiding the False Steps, that were made in carrying on this Rebellion, and of investing themselves more surely another Day with the Spoils of a miserable People: But whatever Any of us may Design, or shall Pursue in Consequence of our Reflexions on the History of those Calamitous Times, and of the Deliverance of this Joyful Day; God alone will Govern the World; will overrule all the rash and all the wiser Counsels of Men; all their Ambitious Views, and all their Honest Zeal so, as alone to answer his own Righteous Purposes, without any Other Regard had to Us, and our Vain Designs, than to prevent our Doing more Mischief to one another, than the Sins of us all do justly deserve.

Under these Apprehensions let us *submit our selves to the Mighty Hand of God*, even when we are, in this solemn Manner, Praising his Holy Name, for having so wonderfully *Lifted us up*: Then will *the Lord of Hosts be no more unto the Residue of our People*,

People, as in the former Days! He will make us dwell in Peaceable Habitations, in Sure Dwellings, and in Quiet Resting Places! And our Jerusalem shall become a Joy and Praise in the Earth. — Which God of his Mercy Grant, &c.

FINIS.